

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly newscast

May 16th, 2014

Lessons prepared by Amie Sondheim & Justine Light

Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as, an ESL classroom resource



www.alberta.ca

<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

News story #1 33 Animals Saved

How many animals should one person be allowed to keep in his or her house? This first story is about a dog owner who had 33 dogs taken away because they were all treated badly.

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary:

Match the words with their definitions. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Words	Definitions
	poor condition	a) mean; not nice
	investigation	b) found
	discovered	c) someone who causes animals to make offspring (babies)
	cruelty	d) suffering from bad care; not looked after well
	breeder	e) a bad state
	neglected	f) pee
	witness	g) look into; research
	urine	h) someone who has seen or heard something in person

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

Humane Society – a group in charge of stopping cruelty to animals and helping animals find a good home

medical checks – to be looked over very carefully by a doctor and/or a nurse

dog show – live shows that dog owners bring their dogs to so they can perform and do tricks for a crowd of people

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **true (T)** or **false (F)**. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. ____ The dogs that were taken by the Humane Society were in good condition.
2. ____ The manager of animal cruelty investigations thinks the dogs were neglected.
3. ____ The dogs will be given medical checks.
4. ____ Before the medical checks are to be given, witnesses will give statements.
5. ____ A neighbour found the dogs.
6. ____ There was a lot of food and water when the dogs were discovered.
7. ____ The person who owns the 33 dogs is also a dog breeder.

Discussion: What would you do if you saw a neighbour or someone you know treating an animal badly? What is bad treatment and what is good treatment for animals? What kinds of things should all animals be given by their owners?

News story #2 Gay Pride

Why is it important to accept and support gay athletes just as much as straight athletes? This second story is about anti-gay comments that were made about one football player by another football player on the Calgary Stampeders' football team.

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary: Use one of the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Word	Definition
fined (verb)	To be charged money for doing something wrong
openly (adverb)	To not hide something
gay (adjective)	To have sexual desire towards someone who is the same gender
athletes (noun)	People who are in sports regularly
faith (noun)	Belief or trust in something
support (verb)	To help and show somebody kindness
fans (noun)	People who really like sports and athletes

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

Calgary Stampeders – Calgary's football team

Tweet – messages sent out on Twitter (the social network)

1. All of the sports _____ cheer loudly for their favourite team.
2. Being _____ gay is good for a gay person's spirit and soul.
3. There are lots of great _____ who are very good football players.
4. It is good to show your friends and family _____ when they are going through a difficult time.
5. Most religious people have a very strong _____ in God.
6. If you break the law and get caught, you will probably get _____.
7. It is so nice to see that there is far more acceptance these days, than there used to be for _____ people.

Listening Activity: Answer the Questions

1. Why was Maurice Price fined?
2. Who fined Maurice Price?
3. How does the CFL feel about people who are openly gay?
4. How do the football fans feel about the CFL's response to Price?
5. Who is Greg Bates?
6. What does Bates say about Maurice Price's tweets?

Discussion: Why are equal rights for all people important? Have you ever been made fun of or picked on simply for being who you are? What could you say to someone if you heard him or her making fun of someone else for being gay, or for being a certain religion, or race?

News story #3 Neighbour Day

Do you know your neighbours very well? Do you ever get together with them for fun? This next story is about a new day called “Neighbour Day” that is being introduced to Calgarians, so they can get to know their neighbours better.

Vocabulary: Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. Choose the group of synonyms (words with similar meaning) that best match each of the vocabulary words.

Answers are in the appendix.

Answer	Words	Synonyms
	1. celebrate	a) each year ceremony
	2. anniversary	b) big mess hazard
	3. flood	c) honor praise
	4. disaster	d) special proper
	5. overcome	e) celebration tribute
	6. formal	f) lots of water downpour
	7. commemoration	g) get over to move past

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

block party – a party that happens on your block, in your neighbourhood, with your neighbours

community clean-up- when the people in your neighbourhood get together to clean up outside

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Circle the correct answer

Answers are in the appendix.

1. Calgary will celebrate its: a) first Neighbour Day b) flood anniversary	2. The flood was: a) on the anniversary of the special day b) the largest mess in Calgary’s history
3. The mayor wants Calgarians to: a) celebrate the flood together b) become friends and get to know each other	4. On Neighbour Day, people probably will: a) have a barbeque or clean-up the community b) re-live the flood and think about what is lost
5. People can get to know their neighbours by: a) having a block party b) overcoming challenges	6. The city wants to have: a) a party to celebrate the flood on June 20th b) a commemoration of the flood

Activity: In partners create a poster to advertise for Neighbour Day. Create and attach a list of conversation topics that people can talk about at a community barbeque.

Language Focus

“The” – A closer look at the definite article

“The” can go with both countable nouns (e.g. *The boy*) and uncountable nouns (e.g. *The bread*).

“The” is used to refer to something or someone assumed to be known to both the speaker/writer and the listener/reader. **“The” is used with a noun which:**

1. Has already been introduced
2. Is about to be introduced
3. Is considered to be common knowledge
4. Has become known from the situation

Let’s look at the first news story and decide **why** “The” was used in each case. The number **(1,2,3 or 4)** will be put in brackets() next to the article “The”, to show you which use it is:

The(3) Calgary Humane Society says **the(2)** dogs it took yesterday from a home in Acadia are in poor condition. Brad Nichols is **the(4)** manager of animal cruelty investigations. He believes **the(1)** 33 animals suffered from neglect. Nichols said once **the(4)** medical checks are finished and he has statements from witnesses, charges are likely. A neighbour who discovered **the(1)** dogs says there was no food or water and **the(1)** home smelled of urine. She says **the(4)** owner is a dog breeder who is well known on **the(3)** dog show circuit.

You Try!

1. All of the definite articles have been removed from the next 2 stories. Read them and put “The” in all the right places. Next, check your work by going back and listening to the two stories again.
2. Now, underline the noun the article is referring to
3. Try to decide why “The” is being used by numbering it either **(1,2,3 or 4)**

Answers are in the appendix.

Story 2:

Calgary Stampeders player Maurice Price has been fined by Canadian Football League for comments he made about openly gay athlete, Michael Sam. Price made comments on Twitter that his religious faith wouldn't let him accept what took place. CFL fined Price and says it fully supports openly-gay athletes. Some football fans want CFL to do more than fine Maurice Price. Greg Bates runs a Stamps fan website. He says fine is a good first step and while many fans don't agree with Price, his tweets won't affect support for team in the long run.

Story 3:

Calgary will celebrate its first Neighbour Day on June 21st to mark first anniversary of 2013 flood. Flood was biggest disaster in city's history. Mayor Naheed Nenshi wants Calgarians to get to know their neighbours that day by having a barbeque, or a block party, or by doing a community clean-up. He says it's not a celebration of flood but a time to think about good things that came from overcoming that challenge. City is planning a more formal commemoration of flood for June 20th.

Transcripts of Weekly news stories

	MAY 16 TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, I'm Rosa Marchitelli. You're listening to Learning English with CBC for the week of May 16 th .	0:00
Story 1	The Calgary Humane Society says the dogs it took yesterday from a home in Acadia are in poor condition. Brad Nichols is the manager of animal cruelty investigations. He believes the 33 animals suffered from neglect. Nichols said once the medical checks are finished and he has statements from witnesses, charges are likely. A neighbour who discovered the dogs says there was no food or water and the home smelled of urine. She says the owner is a dog breeder who is well known on the dog show circuit.	0:19
Story 2	Calgary Stampeders player Maurice Price has been fined by the Canadian Football League for comments he made about openly gay athlete, Michael Sam. Price made comments on Twitter that his religious faith wouldn't let him accept what took place. The CFL fined Price and says it fully supports openly-gay athletes. Some football fans want the CFL to do more than fine Maurice Price. Greg Bates runs a Stamps fan website. He says the fine is a good first step and while many fans don't agree with Price, his tweets won't affect support for the team in the long run.	0:59
Story 3	Calgary will celebrate its first Neighbour Day on June 21st to mark the first anniversary of the 2013 flood. The flood was the biggest disaster in the city's history. Mayor Naheed Nenshi wants Calgarians to get to know their neighbours that day by having a barbeque, or a block party, or by doing a community clean-up. He says it's not a celebration of the flood but a time to think about the good things that came from overcoming that challenge. The City is planning a more formal commemoration of the flood for June 20th.	1:53

Answer keys

News story 1

Vocabulary: Match the definitions

Answer	Words	Definitions
e	poor condition	a) mean; not nice
g	investigation	b) found
b	discovered	c) someone who causes animals to make offspring (babies)
a	cruelty	d) suffering from bad care; not looked after well
c	breeder	e) a bad state
d	neglected	f) pee
h	witness	g) look into; research
f	urine	h) someone who has seen or heard something in person

Listening: True or False?

1. **F** The dogs that were taken were in good condition.
2. **T** The manager of animal cruelty investigations thinks the dogs were neglected.
3. **T** The dogs will be given medical checks.
4. **F** Before the medical checks are to be given, witnesses will give statements.
5. **T** A neighbour found the dogs.
6. **F** There was a lot of food and water when the dogs were discovered.
7. **T** The person who owns all of the dogs is also a dog breeder.

News story 2

Vocabulary: Fill in the blanks

1. All of the sports **fans** cheer loudly for their favourite team.
2. Being **openly** gay is good for a gay person's spirit and soul.
3. There are lots of great **athletes** who are very good football players.
4. It is good to show your friends and family **support** when they are going through a difficult time.
5. Most religious people have a very strong **faith** in God.
6. If you break the law and get caught, you will probably get **fined** .
7. It is so nice to see that there is far more acceptance these days, than there used to be for **gay** people.

Listening: Answer the questions

1. Why was Maurice Price fined? **For making comments about not being able to accept an openly gay athlete on his Twitter account**

2. Who fined Maurice Price? **The Canadian Football League (CFL)**
3. How does the CFL feel about people who are openly gay? **It fully supports openly gay athletes.**
4. How do the football fans feel about the CFL's response to Price? **Some fans want the CFL to do more than just fine Price.**
5. Who is Greg Bates? **He runs a fan website for the Calgary Stampeders called "Stamps".**
6. What does Bates say about Maurice Price's tweets? **He says the tweets won't affect support for the Stampeders in the long run.**

News story 3

Vocabulary:

Answer	Words	Synonyms
c	1. celebrate	a) each year ceremony
a	2. anniversary	b) big mess hazard
f	3. flood	c) honor praise
b	4. disaster	d) special proper
g	5. overcome	e) celebration tribute
d	6. formal	f) lots of water downpour
e	7. commemoration	g) get over to move past

Listening:

1. Calgary will celebrate its: a) first Neighbour Day b) flood anniversary	2. The flood was: a) on the anniversary of the special day b) the largest mess in Calgary's history
3. The mayor wants Calgarians to: a) celebrate the flood together b) become friends and get to know each other	4. On Neighbour Day, people probably will: a) have a barbeque or clean-up the community b) re-live the flood and think about what is lost
5. People can get to know their neighbours by: a) having a block party b) overcoming challenges	6. The city wants to have: a) a party to celebrate the flood on June 20th b) a commemoration of the flood

Language focus:

1. Has already been introduced
2. Is about to be introduced
3. Is considered to be common knowledge
4. Has become known from the situation

Calgary Stampeders player Maurice Price has been fined by **the(3)** Canadian Football League for comments he made about openly gay athlete, Michael Sam. Price made comments on Twitter that his religious faith wouldn't let him accept what took place. **The(3)** CFL fined Price and says it fully supports openly-gay athletes. Some football fans want **the(3)** CFL to do more than fine Maurice Price. Greg Bates runs a Stamps fan website. He says **the(1)** fine is a good first step and while many fans don't agree with Price, his tweets won't affect support for **the(1)** team in **the(4)** long run.

Calgary will celebrate its first Neighbour Day on June 21st to mark **the(2)** first anniversary of **the(3)** 2013 flood. **The(3)** flood was **the(4)** biggest disaster in **the(4)** city's history. Mayor Naheed Nenshi wants Calgarians to get to know their neighbours that day by having a barbeque, or a block party, or by doing a community clean-up. He says it's not a celebration of **the(3)** flood but a time to think about **the(2)** good things that came from overcoming that challenge. **The(1)** City is planning a more formal commemoration of **the(3)** flood for June 20th.

Note: Some of the answers that are marked (3) for being common knowledge could also be marked (1) because they have already been introduced in the story too.